

# **Memorandum of Cooperation Between White House Interagency Group on Insular Areas and American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands**

## **Preamble**

Whereas, President Clinton issued a Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies dated August 9, 1989, creating the Interagency Group on Insular Areas ("IGIA");

Whereas, the IGIA shall work with the Secretary of the Interior to identify issues concerning American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands (collectively, "Insular Areas") and to make recommendations to the President concerning Federal Government policies and programs raising such issues;

Whereas, the IGIA shall consult with the Governors, Delegates to the U.S. House of Representatives and other elected representatives of the Insular Areas on issues of concern;

Whereas, Executive departments and agencies should coordinate significant decisions and activities related to the Insular Areas with the IGIA;

Whereas, the IGIA, held an initial organizational meeting on January 18, 2000 and decided to support general goals in working with the Insular areas, including promoting sustainable economic growth consistent with the sound management of natural resources and improving the general welfare of the Insular Areas consistent with U.S. social and economic indicators;

Whereas, the IGIA, through the Department of the Interior, requested the executive departments and agencies for inventories of their existing programs applicable to the Insular Areas, which includes programs for which the Insular Areas may not be currently participating;

Whereas, the IGIA, through the Department of the Interior, solicited ideas and proposals from the Governors, Congressional Delegates and other elected officials of the Insular Areas which had a nexus with the Federal Government and would promote economic and social development;

Whereas, staff-level representatives of the executive departments and agencies represented in the IGIA and representatives from the Insular Areas conducted a series of issue cluster meetings to discuss the Insular Area proposals and other Federal programs;

Whereas these meetings resulted in the exchange of numerous ideas and other useful information that are beneficial to the Federal Government and the Insular Areas;

Whereas these meetings also resulted in the beginning of discussions that have the potential for making progress on many of the ideas and proposals raised by the Insular Areas;

Whereas these meetings also resulted in the identification of a number of existing Federal programs that could be made applicable to the Insular Areas and which would forward their economic and social development goals;

Whereas the principals of the IGIA and the Insular Areas met on March 1, 2000, to discuss the progress of these various issues;

Now Therefore;

## **AGREEMENT TO COOPERATE FURTHER:**

**A. Federal-Insular Partnerships:** The IGIA and the Insular Areas agree to conduct a series of further interagency and intergovernmental discussions, with the goal of obtaining as much progress as possible and as quickly as possible in the following areas:

1. Interior, Commerce – leveraging technical assistance for economic planning
2. Interior, Commerce – including islands in Federal trade missions
3. Treasury – include islands in renegotiation of Korean tax treaty
4. Interior, Justice, State – review of visa requirements and eligibility, reimbursement for housing Chinese, Bureau Prison debt, habitual residence regulations
5. Interior, Education, Labor – comprehensive review of job training programs
6. Interior, Inspector General – review of approach in insular areas
7. Interior, Treasury, HUD, SBA, USDA – review of President’s New Market Initiative and Empowerment Zones to fit islands circumstances
8. Interior, Commerce, Labor – applying U.S. statistical programs to islands
9. Interior (FWS/OIA) - Balancing title/conservation requirements for Guam Refuge and reviewing FWS mitigation bank requirements in CNMI
10. Interior, EPA – leveraging technical assistance re VI wastewater facilities
11. Interior, EPA, ACE – fostering closer communication on Tanapag PCB
12. Interior, FEMA – waiver of insurance requirements for concrete bldgs.
13. Interior, Education, HHS, HUD – coordination of technical assistance to improve island grant management capabilities
14. Interior, DOT, State – discuss including insular areas in DOT’s “Open Sky” agreements and participation in bilateral aviation talks
15. Interior, GSA, DOD – coordinate informal administrative process to support policy of returning land to all island governments

It is anticipated that the result of these Federal-Insular Partnerships will be a package of proposals, potentially consisting of agency actions, draft executive orders and draft legislation, that can be acted upon this year.

**B. Application of Federal Programs:** The IGIA and the Insular areas further agree to discuss the feasibility of applying a number of Federal programs identified through the agency program inventories submitted as part of the staff-level process. New programs that can potentially be applied to the Insular Areas, include those from the following agencies:

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|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Education   | 5. USDA               |
| 2. HHS and SSA | 6. Commerce: SBA, EDA |
| 3. Labor       | 7. EPA                |
| 4. HUD         | 8. VA                 |

IN WITNESS HEREOF, the undersigned agree to the foregoing this 1<sup>st</sup> Day of March, 2000.

John Berry  
Jeffrey Farrow

Governor Gutierrez  
Governor Sunia  
Governor Tenorio  
Governor Turnbull

Delegate Underwood  
Delegate Faleomavaega  
Resident Representative Babauta  
Delegate Christian-Christiansen